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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/865,074	05/24/2001	Stephen Paul Zimmerman	8094M	6704

27752 7590 09/27/2002

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EXAMINER	
TRAN LIEN, THUY	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
1761	

DATE MAILED: 09/27/2002

6

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

TC-6

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/865,074

Applicant(s)

Zimmerman et al.

Examiner

Lien Tran

Art Unit

1761



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on May 24, 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 11 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☒ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). 5 6) ☐ Other:

Art Unit: 1761

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459

(1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35

U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
 2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
 3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
 4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.
3. Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Holm et al (4994295).

Holm et al disclose snack products having a predetermined level of surface bubbling. The snack preferably has a combination of surface features as shown in figures 2-3 (see column 12, lines 1-20). The process can be adjusted to produce products ranging from those having very little bubbling to products which are totally pillowed. By adjusting the initial dough moisture, the thickness of the dough sheet and the drying environment, a chip product having any desired

Art Unit: 1761

bubble size distribution can be created (see col. 11 lines 46-55). The snack has a thickness in the range of about .5mm to about 1.5mm (see col. 6 lines 9-10).

Holm et al do not disclose the percentage of surface features as claimed, the size of the surface feature, the coefficient of variation of the thickness and the size of the interior voids.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to vary the parameters as set forth by Holm et al on column 11 lines 46-55 to obtain any distribution of bubbling and the size of the bubbles depending on the appearance and the texture desired. Holm et al disclose products with different sizes of bubbles are preferred. As to the thickness, it would have been obvious to make the snack thicker or thinner depending on the texture desired; for instance, if a crunchier taste is desired, it would have been obvious to make the snack having greater thickness with the drawback of the disadvantage provided by the greater thickness. The bubble provides interior void and as stated above, it would have been obvious to vary the size of the bubble which consequently affects the size of the interior void. The distribution of the bubbles will also affect the volume occupied by solids and it would have been obvious to vary the distribution of the bubbles depending on the appearance and texture desired.

4. Claim 11 is free of prior art because there is no disclosure of the glass transition temperature.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lien Tran whose telephone number is 703-308-1868. The examiner can normally be reached on Wed-Fri. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9310.

Art Unit: 1761

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0661.

September 25, 2002


LIEN TRAN
PRIMARY EXAMINER
Group 1700